



**Thomas Mills**  
High School & Sixth Form

# **NEW INTAKE INFORMATION**

**September 2025**

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# Vision Statement

***We, the staff and governors, aspire to ensure that all our students, irrespective of ability and regardless of anyone's doubts, achieve their potential in full; and we aspire in this way to make Thomas Mills High School the best in the country.***

## A Charter of Values

*We, the staff, pupils and governors of Thomas Mills High School, regard the following twelve values as central to our purpose:*

- 1. A love of learning for its own sake*
- 2. Vigour and optimism in embracing the future*
- 3. The intrinsic virtue of persistent hard work*
- 4. Acceptance of personal responsibility*
- 5. Equal value accorded to all persons*
- 6. Courtesy, self-discipline and respect for others*
- 7. A determination to achieve excellence in all we do*
- 8. Honesty, moral courage and integrity*
- 9. Good fellowship*
- 10. Service to others*
- 11. Leadership and enterprise*
- 12. Respect for the traditions and the achievements of the school*





**Thomas Mills**  
High School & Sixth Form

**Headteacher: P J Hurst BA MA MBA NPQH**

**Thomas Mills High School & Sixth Form**

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### **Letter from Mr Hurst, Headteacher**

Dear Parents

July 2025

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Thomas Mills High School and we look forward to working in partnership with you and your children.

We are very proud of our school and the distinctive opportunities we offer. We are very much focussed on quality teaching and learning. We are fully staffed for September, and the working relationships are exceptionally strong. I believe this is an environment in which children will thrive and develop as confident learners as they progress through the school.

From September 2025 we embark on a new chapter, centred around a new vision statement: "Together we aim high, discover talents and build a brighter future."

We continue to celebrate excellent academic results at all levels and children do make great progress from their starting points. We have maintained a broad and balanced curriculum and the qualifications they will secure as they get older will give them a strong position in employment or with further study. We do not play games with qualifications and are committed to a wide choice of options later on. This cohort will have the chance to study two (from three) modern foreign languages.

In the meantime, I encourage your child to get fully involved in the wider life of the school. We have an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs and trips and our Library has a spectacular number of events.

We welcomed Ofsted back in January 2023 and they had many positive things to say.

- "Pupils at Thomas Mills receive a good quality of education"
- "Pupils show an eagerness to learn"
- "There is strong teaching and students value this"
- "Teachers have strong subject knowledge"
- "Pupils achieve well"
- "There is a culture in which pupils enjoy reading"
- "Pupils agree that it is okay to be different"
- "Sixth Form students show high levels of resilience"
- "Staff like working at the school and feel well supported by leaders"

Successful education is a team effort and a partnership between home and school. Tutors are important and will often be a form of contact although, as the students get older, they do value their independence. Excellent attendance is key to maximising all the opportunities available. Our Charter of Values is important to us and underpin the successful ethos that we have. I do expect self-discipline to be the norm.

I very much look forward to working with you over the next seven years and hope that your child enjoys the challenges and opportunities in and beyond the classroom at Thomas Mills High School.

Yours sincerely

Philip Hurst  
Headteacher





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High School & Sixth Form

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## Letter from Trustees

July 2025

Dear Parents

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Thomas Mills High School. Whether you are joining us for the first time or are a returning family, we are delighted to have you as part of the life and learning here.

As Chair of Trustees, I work alongside a dedicated board who bring a range of skills, experiences and perspectives. Our role is to support and challenge the school's leadership, ensuring that our vision of aiming high, discovering talents and building a brighter future is embedded in all we do.

Trustees are responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the school, ensuring financial stability and holding the school to account for educational outcomes and pupil wellbeing. We are always happy to hear from those of you who might be interested in joining the board.

The Friends of Thomas Mills are a group of volunteers who help raise funds, run activities and functions and bring the school community together. The Friends are always keen to welcome new parents to join them.

The Trustees and I look forward to seeing many of you at school events in the future and on behalf of the Board of Trustees, I wish your child every success at Thomas Mills.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Foster  
Chair of Trustees



# **The Friends of Thomas Mills and the Voluntary School Fund**

As a stand-alone academy, we have the responsibility to manage the school's finances. We have always chosen to invest the largest proportion of our budget in our staff and our curriculum, so that our children have the best education possible. However, as you are no doubt aware, school budgets have been challenging for many years now.

The continuous work of the 'Friends of Thomas Mills' is hugely appreciated. Through the Friends, parents have been, and continue to be, very generous and for this we are grateful. Whether it is selling raffle tickets, contributing prizes, or organising and attending events. Recent examples of how money has been spent include a new school minibus and lighting for the Drama Department. More recently, the Friends and Governors have concentrated their efforts on the 'Fab Labs' Appeal, to raise funds for the refurbishment of our science laboratories – to date the appeal has raised £53,000 through Friends' events and donations which has enabled the refurbishment of N4 – before and after shots are on our website if you haven't seen them and the transformation their contributions made.

However, we realise that there are parents who find it difficult to support Friends' events, perhaps through the pressure of work or family commitments, but who might like to contribute in some other way.

We therefore operate a 'Voluntary School Fund'. This is in addition to, and separate from, the Friends. We must emphasise that it is entirely voluntary. It is a way in which you (or your family or relatives) can donate to the school through a monthly contribution. The fund will be used to provide our children with items that cannot be financed through educational budgets or our more specific fundraising projects.

## **How can I help?**

If supporters were able to give on a regular basis and claim Gift Aid, funds will accumulate quickly. As an example: if 500 people contributed £3 per month this would raise £18,000 per annum (an extra £4,500 if Gift Aid was applied); a total of £22,500 per year. We recognise that now is not an easy time for anyone, but a little donation from everyone would amount to a significant sum for the school.

The Voluntary School Fund will be used to enhance the educational opportunities of our children. It might finance new laptops/computers, books, sports equipment, or be used to contribute to small refurbishment projects, such as new shelving in the library. It will be used wherever the need is greatest.

If you would like to make a regular contribution to the 'Voluntary School Fund', please find attached a Standing Order and Gift Aid form. Updates will be given through letters about how the funds are being used. We thank you in advance for your help with this important initiative.

**The next AGM is on Wednesday 17 September 2025 at 6.00pm in the Library**



# PARENT INFORMATION

## School Term Dates for Academic Year 2025/2026

### **AUTUMN TERM \***

Wednesday 3 September (Year 7 & 12 only) – Friday 19 December 2025

**Thursday 4 September – all Year Groups return**

**Half Term:** Monday 27 October – Friday 31 October 2025

(Staff Professional Days: Monday 1 September and Tuesday 2 September 2025)

### **SPRING TERM \***

Tuesday 6 January – Friday 27 March 2026

**Half Term:** Monday 16 February – Friday 20 February 2026

(Staff Professional Day: Monday 5 January and Friday 13 February 2026)

### **SUMMER TERM \***

Monday 13 April – Friday 17 July 2026

**Half Term:** Monday 25 May – Friday 29 May 2026

(Staff Professional Day: Monday 20 July 2026)

## School Day and Times

08.55 Registration and Assembly	
09.25 Period 1	13.00 Lunch
10.15 Period 2	14.00 Registration
11.05 Break Time	14.05 Period 5
11.20 Period 3	14.55 Period 6
12.10 Period 4	15.45 School ends

## The Library and Resources Area

This is routinely open before and after school, allowing pupils access to the computer network and other research facilities. Pupils will not be supervised before 8.30am and are expected to leave by 5.00pm.

At Thomas Mills High School we believe that our Library should fuel our pupils and students' imagination and thirst for knowledge, inspiring them to learn no matter what their situation or background. We work hard to create a positive, supporting and welcoming environment in our Library; it's a great place to come if you want to meet friends, read and relax or if you've accidentally taken a wrong turn in the school corridor and need help finding a class.

At break and lunchtime, the Library is a space where students can meet friends, join a lunchtime club or take some time to read and relax. Clubs vary each year, but have historically included Book Clubs, Cards and Comics, Quiz Club, Film Club, Chess, Table-Top Games and Craft. Additionally, we run special events such as our Yearly Comic Con, Book Week (with our English Department) and WBD -- there's plenty to get involved in during the year!

As a Year 7 student, your child will have one Accelerated Reader lesson in the Library per week. These classes help students build upon their comprehension skills; a typical lesson includes a class comprehension task, followed by individual reading and quizzing

accompanied by classical music. The students will also have some fun Reading for Pleasure classes run by our librarian (these include Super-Library Sweep and Book Speed Dating). More information about these will be taken home by students in the first week of term.

## Pupil Groupings – Year 7

Children joining Thomas Mills High School as members of the September 2025 New Intake have been placed in one of seven tutor groups by Mr Symes, Head of Year 7.

They will be taught in lessons in different groups. For a few others they will be grouped differently.

- 1 Mixed Ability Teaching Groups (five groups across the year unless otherwise indicated):
  - English
  - Art
  - Geography
  - Religious Studies
  - History
  - Personal Development
  - Music
  - Drama
  - Design Technology and ICT (eight groups across the year), IT, Computer Science, Resistant Materials and Food & Nutrition
  - PE
  - MFL (6 groups, mixed ability), 2 French/German, 2 French/Spanish, 2 German/Spanish
  
- 2 Setted from end of September (7 common groups based initially upon Mathematics baseline assessment and cognitive testing conducted in September)
  - Mathematics
  - Science

## Essential Equipment for Year 7 Pupils

Essential Equipment	Desirable Equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 pens</li> <li>• Pencil</li> <li>• Ruler</li> <li>• Scientific calculator (we recommend the New Casio FX-83GTCW)</li> </ul> <p>All stored in a pencil case</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlighter</li> <li>• A different coloured pen for marking work</li> <li>• Eraser</li> <li>• Pencil Sharpener</li> <li>• Protractor</li> <li>• Compass</li> <li>• Gluestick</li> </ul>

# Uniform

As a school, we aim to uphold high standards of dress and appearance of our pupils. We have been most grateful to parents over the years for their co-operation in this matter and we expect all new parents to support the maintenance of high standards.

All items can be purchased from Messrs Coes, 22 Norwich Road, Ipswich, who are usually present to sell school uniform at the New Intake evening in June. Please note that the school jumper, tie (and skirt, if chosen) are the only items that must be purchased from Coes.

## GIRLS

Sensible black or brown shoes, not trainers, not boots, not suede and not canvas

White or navy plain socks or black or navy tights (in a thick knit)

Pleated (stitched down) skirt in castle grey check, length on or below the knee

OR mid-grey trousers (straight leg, creased). Not flared or stretch fabric. Clip and zip fastening. Available, as acceptable skirts, from Messrs. Coes) **NOT LEGGINGS.**

White shirt

School tie

Navy V-neck jumper with the school badge and motto. No other motif is acceptable

If the school deems anything a pupil is wearing is not appropriate for school, it reserves the right to insist the pupil does not wear that item.

## BOYS

Sensible black or brown shoes, not trainers and not suede and not canvas

Black or grey socks.

Plain dark grey trousers, not black and not corduroy or denim

**Acceptable fabric for trousers is a woven polyester (65%) and viscose (35%) mix**

Mid-Grey Tailored shorts are now optional from May half-term

White shirt

School tie

Navy V-neck jumper with the school badge and motto. No other motif is acceptable

# Physical Education Department PE Kit – Girls and Boys

\*\* available only from Coes, the School outfitters

## Essential Items

Polo shirt – white with navy school badge (Aptus)\*\* Please note that a plain white, collared polo shirt is also acceptable.

Shorts – navy, plain (microfibre), no stripes

Games socks – navy with emerald green hoops top\*\*

White sport socks

Studded boots

Training shoes (non-marking soles)

Shin Pads: The wearing of shin pads is required for hockey and football for safety purposes.

# Optional Extras

Rugby shirt – reversible; navy/emerald green (Akoa)\*\* *although this is optional, please note that normal PE shirts are not as robust or designed to play rugby in.*

Training top and trousers - (Aptus) navy\*\*

Navy blue base layer

Girls: Navy skort/plain navy sports leggings

Sports bra (advisable)

The school strongly recommends that students wear mouth guards when participating in rugby and hockey. **Parents are also reminded that neither the School, nor the Academy Trust accepts responsibility for any damage or loss to their child's belongings whilst in school. All items of clothing and personal property should be clearly marked with the owner's name. Repeated on page 11.**

## Thomas Mills High School Uniform Price List

May 2025  
**COES**  
Personal style since 1928

	Day Uniform			Sports Uniform	
	From £	To £		From £	To £
Jumper	20.95	46.95	Polo Shirt	21.50	26.95
Trousers	22.95	29.95	Navy Shorts	10.50	12.50
Skirt	33.95	44.50	Rugby Shirt	29.95	
Shirt/Blouse	18.50	24.50	Games Socks	7.50	8.99
Tie	6.50		PE Socks	5.99	6.99
Socks - Ankle (5pp)	8.95	11.50	Tracksuit Top	29.95	36.95
Opaque Tights (2pp)	9.95		Tracksuit Trouser	32.00	40.95
School Shoes	From £56.00		Games Skort	17.95	20.95
			Mouthguard	From £8.00	
			Shin Pads	From £20.00	
			Trainers	From £50.00	
			Football Boots	From £50.00	

**Recommended time for an in store appointment if required**  
**Day Uniform 30 minutes - Day & Sports Uniform 45 minutes**

**Buy Schoolwear Online – [www.coes.co.uk](http://www.coes.co.uk)**

If ordering online and you have any questions then please email the customer services team and they will be happy to assist.

Email: [help@coes.co.uk](mailto:help@coes.co.uk)

Please refer to our web site for shop opening hours, how to book an appointment & other information : [coes.co.uk/backtoschool](http://coes.co.uk/backtoschool)

Please note prices are subject to change.

W D Coe Limited, 20-28 Norwich Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2NH  
Telephone : 01473 256061 Email : [customerservices@coes.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@coes.co.uk)

Registered in England Number 671546. Registered Address 20-28 Norwich Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, England, IP1 2NH

## Valuables should never be left unattended.

**Pupils** are advised not to bring expensive mobile devices or the such like, including 'AirPods', 'Earbuds', 'iPods', 'iPads' or similar equipment to school.

## Mobile phones

Mobile phones **should not be seen in pupils' possession throughout the school day** (see protocol page 25).

## Jewellery

Ear loops, hooks, large earrings and nose piercings are not suitable for school. Movement around the school at times becomes congested and such articles of jewellery become a safety hazard. For this reason, we ask pupils to confine themselves to one stud in each ear, other than a wristwatch, other forms of jewellery are not acceptable and will be confiscated. Extreme hairstyles are likely to be distracting and for this reason we expect pupils to confine themselves to conventional styles (and colours). The school reserves the right to insist that pupils remove make-up including nail varnish.

## Coats

Should not be worn in the building but should be left in lockers or carried in a bag.

## School Lockers

Every Year 7 pupil at Thomas Mills High School will be allocated a locker in the school as close as possible to the Tutor Base. This enables each pupil to store books, equipment, etc and avoids the need to carry all belongings during the whole school day.

The cost of a locker is £5 per year for your child. This includes its own combination padlock and has a system for access should a code be forgotten. The £5 is paid for via the school Gateway payment system.

## School Transport

Parents are reminded that responsibility for providing free transport to school lies with the authority, Suffolk County Council, and not with individual schools. Similarly places on private buses are a matter between individual parents and the operating company.

**IMPORTANT CHANGE** - If your child is entitled OR you think they are entitled to free school transport, the bus pass will NOT be sent directly to your home address in preparation for the start of the academic year. **You must OPT-IN for both free and subsidised bus passes.** If a child is eligible for Suffolk County Council funded school travel the Passenger Transport Team will contact parents/carers by the end of March 2025 with details of how and when to opt-in. This and other eligibility questions on school transport can be done via

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/school-travel/bus-getting-to-school/>  
or for more advice call Suffolk Passenger Transport

**Customer service team: 0345 606 6067. General enquires: 0345 606 6173**

Passes should be carried on all bus journeys to and from school. Mrs Elaine Parocki, Administration Officer, is the person to contact at school. We are happy to advise on bus routes and timings.

We also make plain to all pupils who travel by bus (including those who pay Whincops, Belle and First Eastern directly) that we expect them to behave courteously and responsibly. Pupils are reminded about remaining seated, wearing a seatbelt, following the bus driver's instructions and that smoking/vaping is forbidden.

If parents are concerned about issues regarding behaviour on school buses, they may be best advised to contact either School Transport or the individual operator directly.

If a Travel Pass is lost or damaged, it will need to be replaced. A Temporary Travel Pass can be requested at the School Office. Requests should be made before 1.00 p.m. to ensure a pass is ready for the end of the school day. A replacement Travel Pass costs £10. To apply for a replacement pass or to upload a photo for a Travel Pass go online to:

[www.suffolkonboard.com/home-to-school-transport](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/home-to-school-transport)

## **Cycling to School**

Set out below is a check-list which parents should find helpful if your son or daughter intends to cycle to school. This advice has been taken from the most recent publications on safety.

The bicycle itself must have the following:

- Two effective braking systems
- Front and rear lights
- A white front reflector and a red rear reflector

In order to further enhance your child's safety, the following are strongly recommended:

- Your child should wear a cycling helmet
- Your child should wear reflective bands or clothing
- Your child should be conversant with the Highway Code
- If at all possible, your child should undertake a Cycling Proficiency Test. (If there are sufficient parents interested, we would be more than happy to arrange cycling proficiency training.)

Bicycles should be kept in the cycle shed and securely locked when unattended. You should also be aware that the school can accept no responsibility for any theft or damage which may occur.

## **School Lunch Information and Allergy Awareness**

### **Introducing Lunchtime Co – School Meals and School Catering Service, Your Catering Team...**

Lunchtime Co are a specialist school food provider, who offer a dedicated and tailored service.

The sourcing of good quality and local ingredients is one of their key priorities and have a team of expert chefs that will train our school kitchen teams to produce tasty food which looks good on the counter.

Their passion for working in partnership with us was a key feature of their bid to work with us and will hold regular feedback sessions with pupils to tailor the offer accordingly, whilst providing healthy and nutritious food.

### **Is Your Child Eligible For Free School Meals?**

Your child may be eligible for free school meals if you get an income-based benefit (for example Income Support), or Child Tax Credit only. You can sometimes qualify if you get Working Tax Credit as well. But it depends on the income your tax credits have been worked out on, and where you live in the UK.

How do Parents claim? Free school meals are administered by local authorities or in Northern Ireland the local education and library boards. To make a claim contact your local authority or local education and library board.

We love to give our secondary school students a real variety of foods to choose from, so lunch times are a period of their day they really look forward to.

**Main Meal Deals - £2.50**

A Main Meal & Dessert

Sandwich/Wrap/Baguette  
And a Bottled Drink  
And a Home Bake

(Exclusions may apply – please see your posters within the school)

## **Allergy Awareness**

Lunchtime Co Allergen Management procedures are taken extremely seriously, and all kitchens are trained by our nutrition teams to be fully compliant to the Food Information for Consumer Regulations (2014).

These regulations make it a legal requirement to provide allergen information for all food bought and/or consumed in house.

We provide allergy reports for every recipe on our menu cycle, all we ask is that you as a parent or guardian inform the school of any special dietary requirements and changes that occur.

# Sample Menus

*gastro*

## WEEK 1 MENU

WEEKS:

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>THE MAIN EVENT</b>	Gourmet American Style Hot dog with Toppings Served with Baked Cajun Wedges and Boston Beans	Chicken & Peppers in Black Beans Sauce served Noodles or Egg Fried Rice & <u>Stir fried</u> Vegetables	Homemade Beef Lasagne served with Garlic & Herb Bread, Seasonal Vegetables or Mixed Salad	Roast Chicken served with Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Broccoli, Yorkshire Pudding and Gravy	Battered Fish Fillet Served with Chips, Garden Peas or Beans
<i>MEAT FREE</i>	Gourmet American Style Vegan Hot dog with Toppings Served with Baked Cajun Wedges and Boston Beans	Sweet & Sour Vegetables served Noodles or Egg Fried Rice & <u>Stir fried</u> Vegetables	Homemade Vegetarian Lasagne Served with Garlic & Herb Bread, Seasonal Vegetables or Mixed Salad	Cauliflower & Broccoli Cheese served with Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Cabbage, Yorkshire Pudding and Gravy	Vegan Quorn Sausage Served with Chips, Garden Peas or Baked Beans
PASTA PIAZZA	Firecracker Chicken Or Zingy Pepper Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings	Amigo Meatball Or Vegetarian Chilli Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings	Smokey Pepperoni Or Cheese Sauce Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings	Carbonara Or Moroccan Veg Tagine Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings	Chinese Chicken Curry Or <u>Arrabiata</u> Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings
DELI DEAL	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots
<i>JUST DESSERTS</i>	Choose One of Our Fabulous Desserts Chocolate Brownie Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot	Choose One of Our Fabulous Desserts Toffee Apple crumble Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot	Choose One of Our Fabulous Desserts Victoria Sponge Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot	Choose One Dessert Fabulous Desserts Pineapple Cake Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot	Choose One of Our Fabulous Desserts Jam Tart Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot

*gastro*

## WEEK 2 MENU

WEEKS:

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>THE MAIN EVENT</b>	Baked Chilli Beef Enchiladas Served with Mexican Vegetable Rice	Swedish Meatballs Served With Mashed Potato, Seasonal Vegetables & Creamy Mashed Potato	Marinated Jerk Chicken Thighs Served with Rice & Beans	Roast Pork Lion served with Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Broccoli, Stuffing and Gravy	Battered Fish Fillet Served with Chips, Garden Peas or Beans
<i>MEAT FREE</i>	Vegan Chilli con Carne Served with Mexican Vegetable Rice & Sour Cream	Meat Free Meatballs Served With Mashed Potato, Seasonal Vegetables & Creamy Mashed Potato	Jerk Vegetable & Bean Stew Served with Braised Rice	Quorn Fillet served with Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Cabbage, Yorkshire Pudding and Gravy	Vegetable Nuggets served with Chips, Garden Peas or Baked Beans
PASTA PIAZZA	Bangers & Beans Or Basilico Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings	BBQ Pulled Pork Or Tomato & Mascarpone Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings	Chicken Tikka Or Pomodoro Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings	Chicken Italiano Or Zingy Pepper Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings	BBQ Sausage Or Veg Tikka Served on Pasta with a choice of Toppings
DELI DEAL	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots	Selection of Delicious Filled Breads, Healthy Salads, Poke Bowls and Pasta Pots
<i>JUST DESSERTS</i>	Choose One of Our Fabulous Desserts Peach & Vanilla Sponge Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot	Choose One of Our Fabulous Desserts Apple & Berry Crumble Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot	Choose One of Our Fabulous Desserts Carrot Cake Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot	Choose One Dessert Fabulous Desserts Lemon Drizzle Cake Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot	Choose One of Our Fabulous Desserts Toffee Crem Tart Fruit Yogurt & Coulis Fresh Fruit Pot

# Cashless Catering System and Free School Meals

## Cashless Catering System

The school operates a cashless catering system using biometrics. This system significantly improves the services we are able to offer pupils, with benefits including:

- Improved security for handling cash transactions in the school
- Reduction in opportunities for bullying (there is nothing that can be stolen)
- Children will not have to remember to bring a card or remember a PIN
- Reduction in queuing time
- Those in receipt of Free School Meals will not be identifiable when purchasing food
- Payments can be made via the School Gateway system allowing both greater convenience and more information for parents on how dinner money is being spent

This is technology that is already used successfully by thousands of schools and you may already be familiar with. That said, we are keen to provide an opportunity for parents to find out more about the system and answer any questions you may have.

We would like to make it clear that the school will comply at all times with the Data Protection Act 2018 and with the provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 regarding the use of biometric data. We will also offer an opportunity to opt out for those pupils who, upon consideration, would prefer to use alternative forms of identification. Please email ([studentservices@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:studentservices@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk)) if you do not wish your child to use biometrics.

Information about the cashless catering system is over the page. Further information will be sent to all parents via School Gateway.

## Free School Meals

Parents can check if pupils are eligible for free school meals at any time via [www.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk) Click on apply and free school meals will be one of the options.

## BioStore Identity Management

For the sake of clarity, biometric information is information about someone's physical or behavioural characteristics that can be used to identify them. There are many possible biometrics, including for example, a digital photograph, fingerprint, or hand shapes. As part of our identity management systems, we will record a biometric measurement taken from a finger, but not a fingerprint image. The information is stored in a highly secure database and will only be used by the school to confirm who is using a range of services. In future we may use other biometric services where appropriate.

Our chosen solution allows us to use a secure database holding biometric data for use with a range of services. This means we will store the least amount of data possible. This reduces the risk of loss of data.

The data that is held cannot be used by any other agency for any other purpose.

The school will not use the biometric information for any purpose other than that stated above. The school will store the biometric information collected securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR Act 2018. The school will not share this information with anyone else and will not unlawfully disclose it to any other person.

## Current Legislation – GDPR 2018

This legislation requires schools to:

- Inform parents about the use of the biometric systems in the school and explain what applications use biometrics
- Receive written permission from parent or guardian if the school is to continue processing biometrics for their child
- Allow children to choose an alternative way of being identified if they wish
- Please note that children under 18 who do not have permission will not be able to use existing or new biometric systems when using services in schools.

If you do not wish your child to use the biometric system or your child chooses to use an alternative form of identification, we will provide reasonable alternative arrangements that allow them to access current and future services.

Please note that when he/she leaves the school, or if for some other reason he/she ceases to use the biometric system, his/her biometric data will be permanently deleted.

If you would like to discuss this in more detail, please email [inmail@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:inmail@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk) with biometrics as the subject line, or contact the School Finance Office on 01728 726679.

Once your child ceases to use the biometric recognition system, his/her biometric information will be securely and permanently deleted by the school. Consent can be withdrawn at any time in writing.

## Homework – Guidance for Parents

1. **The Purpose of Homework:** Homework is an important part of the learning process. It includes, in principle, both work set by class teachers and independent study by pupils (using 'reading books', text books or other sources such as on-line study material). The independent study element will become increasingly important as pupils progress through their education.

Set homework may be concerned with:

- preparation for work in class;
- extending work begun in class;
- reinforcing work completed in class; or
- learning work that has been undertaken at home or in class.

In general terms, pupils and parents should expect that set homework:

- will vary in amount and type both from subject to subject and according to the pupil's age group;
- may include any of the following activities: reading; researching; collecting materials and images; writing either short or long pieces for assessment; making notes; drawing; reinforcing understanding gained in class by working through examples; extending tasks begun in class; learning/revising; listening exercises and practising instruments in music;
- may necessitate the use of ICT. Pupils who do not have access to computers at home sometimes choose to complete such work on the school network at breaks or lunchtimes; they may also seek (through their Head of Year) to borrow a school laptop.

2. Homework is never set unless it is actually necessary to support learning in a subject. It is for class teachers to make a professional judgement as to what is necessary, based on the guidance provided by Heads of Department.

3. It is the responsibility of pupils to record homework accurately and clearly in their Log Books at the time it is set, together with the date by which it is to be completed.
4. **Parents are asked to check Log Books regularly** to make sure that homework is recorded and completed. They should address general queries about homework to the form tutor in the first instance who will, if necessary, direct them to the member of staff best placed to answer them. Parents are expected to sign the Log Book once a week to ensure any messages are passed on.
5. All pupils are required to complete the homework that is set to benefit their education. If homework cannot be completed for good reason, parents are asked to make a note in the Log Book explaining to the teacher what has happened. Sanctions may be used to enforce the homework obligation unless there is a good reason for a pupil not to have done a particular piece of work.
6. In Key Stages 3 and 4, homework is reported upon by being graded as Excellent / Good / Fair / Poor / Very Poor in Progress Reports as part of the Commitment to Learning grade. In the Sixth Form, homework is also reported upon indirectly as part of the Application grade and also through the recording of the number of pieces of work handed in late or that are missing during the reporting period.
7. Pupils with significant SEN may be given modified (*differentiated*) homework. If not, they should only complete those parts of the work that they are able to do. It would be helpful to staff if parents made a note in the Log Book in such cases
8. For the first full week of Year 7 there will be no homework set, followed by one week of only Maths and English. After this homework can be set in any subject. We try to keep homework as far as possible (i.e. without compelling teachers to set unnecessary work) in a regular pattern of relatively short pieces. This is to help pupils to adjust to a homework regime without being overwhelmed by it. Parents who have concerns (especially in the first term) about how their child is coping are asked to bring them to the attention of the form tutor. In most subjects homework is set once a week and collected in the following lesson.
9. Requirements inevitably change as pupils progress through the school. This may sometimes mean that (in a particular week) no homework is set while at other times a significant amount is required to be completed, often with more than one week being allowed for completion.

#### **10. How much time should pupils spend on homework?**

It is impossible to answer this question in absolute terms, but as a general guide it is expected that in an average week pupils should be engaged in studying outside class time (either on work set by a class teacher or on independent study) for the times shown below:

In Key Stage 3: 4 – 6 hours per week, with no more than 1 hour per night (Year 7), or 2 hours in any one night (Year 8). No more than 3 different subjects to be studied on any one night (both years).

In Key Stage 4: 8 – 10 hours per week.

Sixth Form: 15 hours per week.

## **School Attendance**

**The following are issued in accordance with Suffolk Education Authority and DfE guidelines.** Please see the School Attendance Policy on our website. This has been updated to comply with DfE guidance: 'working together to improve school attendance' which applies from September 2022.

If you are unsure about any aspects of these or require more details, please contact the Attendance Team via email [attendance@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk)

1. Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8.55am**.
2. We would expect a parent to contact the school on the first day of absence via email [attendance@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk) If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's Progress Reports as an unauthorised absence.
3. **What reasons will the school accept for absences?**
  - Illness. (Please refer to the NHS guidance: Is my child too ill for school?)
  - Emergency dental/medical appointment. (Please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays).
  - Day of religious observance.
  - Family bereavement.
  - Attending an interview for a job, college, university etc.
  - Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances (only when prior approval has been given). Parents should complete a **Request Form** available from the School Office or school web-site. The Headteacher will not approve your child's absence if the timing coincides with examinations or attendance has not been satisfactory.
  - Extended family visits abroad (only when prior approval has been given).
  - Participation in an approved sporting activity
  - Participation in a public performance for which a licence has been applied, and the application approved by the local Authority (see details overleaf).

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you will be asked to produce medical evidence in the form of copies of appointment details, prescriptions or a letter from a medical professional.

#### 4. **What is unacceptable?**

The school will not authorise absence for visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sister etc

If your child is trying to avoid coming to school, contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance or Head of Year (if tutor is unavailable) immediately and openly discuss your worries. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. Please contact the School Office for details

#### **Further information regarding a Suffolk County Council Licence for a Public Performance.**

A licence is required for a pupil to take part in a public performance not organised or sponsored by Thomas Mills High School and which involves an absence from school.

This is a statutory requirement from Suffolk County Council under Section 37 of the Children and Young Person's Act 1963.

Licence application forms can be obtained by going online to <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/keeping-children-safe/apply-for-a-child-performance-licence> or from the Attendance Team via [attendance@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk)

## **Medical information and First Aid**

If a child has an accident in school, if necessary, we will make every effort to contact parents. If this is not possible we shall consult a doctor for advice and act upon it. It is therefore important that all parents provide an emergency phone number and, in case they are not available at any time, allocate an alternative contact person on the online admissions form.

Although the school does have two medical rooms where children can rest or receive minor treatment, it is obviously better in the case of illness if the child can be collected by a parent and taken home. If the school is unable to contact either parent the alternative emergency contact person will be informed.



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Peer Mentoring Scheme

One of the worries that Year 6 pupils sometimes express during our visits to primary schools is that they will be the smallest/youngest in a big school. There may be worries about coping with homework, bullying, making friends, settling in etc.

To help the youngsters find their feet, each year we train a team of Sixth Form students who act as Peer Mentors. This gives pupils the opportunity to obtain help with any difficulty they are encountering.

We shall try to match up pupil and student appropriately to enable most progress to be made. The representative Sixth Form students will present the scheme to the pupils on New Intake Day.

They work, on a rota basis, with Teaching Assistants in class as well as in our lunchtime Homework and Social Club: 1.10 –1.50pm daily in Room W8.

If you would like any further information on the above or the Peer Mentoring Scheme in general, please do not hesitate to contact the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Team via the School Office.

## Baseline Testing

At the start of Year 7, all students will be tested to allow us to assess students' prior attainment at the beginning of their time at Thomas Mills High School. All students will complete a computer-based dyslexia screening. Students will also complete the following tests:

Mathematics

- Chinn test to assess numeracy

English

- Star reading test to assess reading levels
- Spelling test
- A creative piece of writing

CATS Test

These are a series of online tests which assess:

- Verbal reasoning – thinking with words
- Quantitative (or numerical) reasoning – thinking with numbers
- Non-verbal reasoning – thinking with shapes
- Spatial ability – thinking with shape and space

## Talking Time: Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Talking Time is a series of small group, paired or one-to-one sessions run by a Learning Support Assistant. Using games, discussions, and activities, we hope to help pupils discover more about themselves, and develop self-esteem and resilience to cope with the many varied aspects of life at Thomas Mills High School. We will also explore and unravel what anxiety is, and strategies we can employ to cope with it. Mindfulness is another key area worthy of our exploration.

A selection of Year 7 pupils will be invited to attend sessions at some stage during their first year.

# Accelerated Reader

TMHS uses the Accelerated Reader programme in Years 7 and 8, and your child will take part in this when they enter Year 7 in September. This information sheet is to help you understand the programme and what it involves.

The programme is made up of 2 main elements:

- **Star Testing** – a computer adaptive skills based assessment linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum. These results are used to determine our pupils' reading level for the Accelerated Reader programme. Star testing measures results over time. Tests will be taken 4 times a year.
- **Accelerated Reader** programme – a database of 30,000 quizzes, which test a pupil's understanding of the books read, provides instant feedback and reports for monitoring progress, and promotes a culture of reading. Once the initial Star Test is completed, pupils will discover their Zone of Proximal Development which will guide them towards a selection of the books they should read. Your child will be aware of their ZPD.
- Pupils will choose a book from the **lower** end of their recommended ZPD, and once they have read it they take a quiz. The quiz is testing their **comprehension**, not their memory.
- The website [arbookfind.co.uk](http://arbookfind.co.uk) allows pupils/staff/parents to find books that interest pupils within the appropriate ZPD.

## Why are we doing it?

The programme is used widely across the US, and increasingly in the UK. Data analysis has shown that pupils' reading comprehension can rise as much as fourfold over the course of an academic year. This, of course, benefits the whole curriculum. Renaissance Learning (the company who run the programme) have discovered that some pupils lack the comprehension to fully understand some of the teaching materials used in their subjects, which in turn can have a negative effect on their learning and progress. We are confident that the Accelerated Reader programme will go some way to rectifying this issue and have seen significant improvements with the current Year 7 and 8 cohorts.

## How can parents help?

The programme requires pupils to read for a minimum of 25 minutes a day. We have arranged for this time within school, but any extra encouragement for your child to read at home will be valuable. The website [arbookfind.co.uk](http://arbookfind.co.uk) has a complete list of all books within the programme, so it's a great place to go if you are looking for present ideas!

Obviously we want to make sure we have as many books on the programme as possible, so if you have any books from the list that you would like to rehome we would be very grateful for donations.

If you would like any further information, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

# Mobile Phone Protocol Years 7 – 11

Thomas Mills High School & Sixth-Form is a phone free space. Any mobile devices must be stored securely, lockers are available. Students in years 7-11 cannot have phones with them and if a phone is seen – including in pockets – the phone will be confiscated and a detention will be given.

Confiscated phones will need to be collected by a parent during school office hours (8.30 – 4.00).

Students are allowed to have their phones for travel to and from school. We realise that mobile devices can benefit some of our most vulnerable pupils during their journeys to and from school.

Our 6th form students are privileged to have more freedom with their phones and are allowed to use them in the 6th form centre. Outside of that area the same rules apply as for all other students.

## Privacy Notice

Under data protection law, individuals have a right to be informed about how the school uses any personal data that we hold about them. We comply with this right by providing 'privacy notices' (sometimes called 'fair processing notices') to individuals where we are processing their personal data.

This privacy notice explains how we collect, store and use personal data about **pupils**. We, Thomas Mills High School, are the 'data controller' for the purposes of data protection law and will designate the role of data protection officer to a member of staff or contractor (see 'Contact us' below).

### The personal data we hold

Personal data that we may collect, use, store and share (when appropriate) about pupils includes, but is not restricted to:

- Contact details, contact preferences, date of birth, identification documents
- Results of internal assessments and externally set tests
- Pupil and curricular records
- Characteristics, such as ethnic background, eligibility for free school meals, or special educational needs
- Biometric information. The use of this data also complies with the provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 regarding the use of biometric data and is only held where separate parental consent has been given
- Behaviour information
- Details of any medical conditions, including physical and mental health, food allergy for catering and safety reasons
- Attendance information
- Safeguarding information
- Details of any support received, including care packages, plans and support providers
- Photographs (for identification purposes)
- Photographs (for other purposes where consent has been given)
- CCTV images captured on the school site

We may also hold data about pupils that we have received from other organisations, including other schools, local authorities and the Department for Education.

## **Why we use this data**

We use this data to:

- Support pupil learning
- Monitor and report on pupil progress
- Provide appropriate pastoral care
- Protect pupil welfare
- Assess the quality of our services
- Administer admissions waiting lists
- Carry out research
- Comply with the law regarding data sharing

## **Our legal basis for using this data**

In law, we collect and use pupil information under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and UK law, including:

- Article 6 and Article 9 of the GDPR – processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest.
- Education Act 1996.
- Regulation 5 of the Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013.

We only collect and use pupils' personal data when the law allows us to. Most commonly, we process it where:

- We need to comply with a legal obligation
- We need it to perform an official task in the public interest

Less commonly, we may also process pupils' personal data in situations where:

- We have obtained consent to use it in a certain way
- We need to protect the individual's vital interests (or someone else's interests)
- We have obtained it as part of fulfilling a contract with you

Where we have obtained consent to use pupils' personal data, this consent can be withdrawn at any time. We will make this clear when we ask for consent and explain how consent can be withdrawn.

Some of the reasons listed above for collecting and using pupils' personal data overlap, and there may be several grounds which justify our use of this data.

## **Collecting this information**

While the majority of information we collect about pupils is mandatory, there is some information that can be provided voluntarily. Whenever we seek to collect information from you or your child, we make it clear whether providing it is mandatory or optional. If it is mandatory, we will explain the possible consequences of not complying.

## **How we store this data**

We keep personal information about pupils while they are attending our school. We may also keep it beyond their attendance at our school if this is necessary in order to comply with our legal obligations. Our Retention Schedule sets out how long we keep information about pupils.

## **Data sharing**

We do not share information about pupils with any third party without consent unless the law and our policies allow us to do so. Where it is legally required, or necessary (and it complies with data protection law) we may share personal information about pupils with:

- Our local authority (Suffolk County Council) - to meet our legal obligations to share certain information, such as safeguarding concerns and exclusions and to fulfil our public interest tasks such as provision of free school meals;
- The Department for Education – to meet our legal obligations, e.g. to report on pupil progress;
- The pupil's family and representatives – to carry out our public interest tasks as a school such as reporting on pupil progress or being a contact if a pupil is ill;
- Educators and examining bodies – to carry out public interest tasks as a school in relation to examinations;
- Our regulator, Ofsted, which monitors many of our public interest tasks as a school;
- Suppliers and service providers – to enable them to provide the service we have contracted them for, e.g. educational services, peripatetic music tutors or educational visit providers;
- Financial organisations – to carry out public interest tasks requiring the taking and making of payments, e.g. school meals and educational visits;
- Central and local government – to meet our legal obligations and carry out activities in the public interest, e.g. providing education to children in care or children with special educational needs;
- Our auditors – to meet our legal and public interest obligations relating to financial matters;
- Survey and research organisations – to help us carry out our public interest tasks as a school;
- Health authorities – to carry out our public interest tasks as a school;
- Health and social welfare organisations – where this is covered by our public interest tasks as a school, or safeguards the vital interests of pupils;
- Professional advisers and consultants – to help us carry out our public interest tasks as a school, e.g. providing careers advice;
- Charities and voluntary organisations – which may, for example, provide us with services or support the school's educational activities carried out in the public interest;
- Police forces, courts, tribunals – where this is necessary for the prevention and detection of crime, required by law or for purposes arising out of our public interest tasks such as safeguarding pupils;
- Professional bodies – to help us carry out our public interest tasks as a school.
- Our legal advisors – where this may be evidence in a legal matter.

### **National Pupil Database**

We are required to provide information about pupils to the Department for Education as part of statutory data collections such as the school census and early years census. Some of this information is then stored in the [National Pupil Database](#) (NPD), which is owned and managed by the Department and provides evidence on school performance to inform research.

The database is held electronically so it can easily be turned into statistics. The information is securely collected from a range of sources including schools, local authorities and exam boards.

The Department for Education may share information from the NPD with other organisations which promote children's education or wellbeing in England. Such organisations must agree to strict terms and conditions about how they will use the data.

For more information, see the Department's webpage on [how it collects and shares research data](#).

You can also [contact the Department for Education](#) with any further questions about the NPD.

### **Transferring data internationally**

Where we transfer personal data to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, we will do so in accordance with data protection law.

## **Youth support services**

Once our pupils reach the age of 13, we are legally required to pass on certain information about them to the Integrated Youth and Family Support Services (our youth support services through the Local Authority) as it has legal responsibilities regarding the education or training of 13-19 year-olds.

This information enables it to provide youth support services, post-16 education and training services, and careers advisers.

Parents/carers, or pupils once aged 16 or over, can contact our data protection officer to request that we only pass the individual's name, address and date of birth to the Integrated Youth and Family Support Services.

## **Parents and pupils' rights regarding personal data**

Individuals have a right to make a '**subject access request**' to gain access to personal information that the school holds about them.

Those with parental responsibility can make a request with respect to their child's data where the child is not considered mature enough to understand their rights over their own data (usually under the age of 12), or where the child has provided consent.

Parents also have the right to make a subject access request with respect to any personal data the school holds about them.

If you make a subject access request, and if we do hold information about you or your child, we will:

- Give you a description of it
- Tell you why we are holding and processing it, and how long we will keep it for
- Explain where we got it from, if not from you or your child
- Tell you who it has been, or will be, shared with
- Let you know whether any automated decision-making is being applied to the data, and any consequences of this
- Give you a copy of the information in an intelligible form

Individuals also have the right for their personal information to be transmitted electronically to another organisation in certain circumstances.

If you would like to make a request, please contact our Data Protection Officer.

Parents, or those with parental responsibility, may request access to their child's educational record by contacting the school office, which will be provided at the discretion of the Headteacher within 15 school days of receipt of a written request.

## **Other rights**

Under data protection law, individuals have certain rights regarding how their personal data is used and kept safe, including the right to:

- Object to the use of personal data if it would cause, or is causing, damage or distress
- Prevent it being used to send direct marketing
- Object to decisions being taken by automated means (by a computer or machine, rather than by a person)
- In certain circumstances, have inaccurate personal data corrected, deleted or destroyed, or restrict processing
- Claim compensation for damages caused by a breach of the data protection regulations

To exercise any of these rights, please contact our data protection officer.

### **Complaints**

We take any complaints about our collection and use of personal information very seriously. If you think that our collection or use of personal information is unfair, misleading or inappropriate, or have any other concern about our data processing, please raise this with us in the first instance.

To make a complaint, please contact our data protection officer.

Alternatively, you can make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office:

- Report a concern online at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>
- Call 0303 123 1113
- Or write to: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

### **Contact us**

If you have any questions, concerns or would like more information about anything mentioned in this privacy notice, please mark your enquiry **F.A.O Data Protection Officer** and either post/hand in to the school office or email [inmail@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:inmail@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk)

This notice is based on the [Department for Education's model privacy notice](#) for pupils, amended for parents and to reflect the way we use data in this school.

# School Practice Regarding Photographs of Pupils

Once a year 'official' school photographs of pupils (especially those new to the school) are taken for school records. Parents are informed by letter in advance and are able to purchase copies. They are also able to ask for family group photographs to be taken.

Very occasionally, for example towards the end of Year 11, a whole year group or, even school, photograph is taken. Parents are not usually informed of this separately but do, again, have the option of purchasing copies.

Sometimes photographs are taken by the press to accompany news stories.

During the school year, photographs may be taken to record and celebrate the work of the school. These may be displayed in school, appear on the school website or be published in Outlook (News and Views of Thomas Mills High School and the communities it serves).

Photographs displayed in school may be named, for example, 'Student of the Month', School Council members or Peer Mentors.

It is our custom only to identify individuals by name in Outlook or in the press after consultation with parents. It is possible that photographs taken at school events or during school activities may appear on the school website. Again, individuals would only be identified by name with express permission.

Photographs taken at leaving events, such as the Year 11 Prom or the UVI Leavers' Ball, are distributed only to those who attend. Similarly, any Yearbook is only available to the students and teachers concerned.

The school Mobile Phone Protocol reminds Sixth Formers that 'No photographs should be taken of anyone, staff or student, without the express permission of that person'. Pupils in Years 7 – 11 should not have their mobile phones out at all in school.

In short, at various times during a child's school career, opportunities will arise for photographs to be taken, for example, at school events and activities, which celebrate achievement, significant landmarks or occasions. These photographs may be reproduced and distributed in both printed and electronic formats.

**If parents do not wish their child to be photographed in accordance with the practice outlined above, they are advised to contact Miss Armes, Deputy Headteacher, Pastoral.**

**If you do not wish your child to be photographed, please do not tick the consent section on the online admissions form.**

# Educational Use of The Internet and Microsoft Teams

Guidelines for pupils granted access to the Internet and e-mail facilities

- The School's connection to the Internet is provided as an additional resource for learning and all usage should be of an educational nature
- Users must not search for, view or download material of an illegal, offensive or inappropriate nature. Any such material found by accident should be reported to a member of teaching staff or an IT Technician so that the appropriate steps may be taken
- Under no circumstances should any social media be visited
- Users must not send e-mail communications that are nuisance mail or could be viewed as offensive
- Pupils should not accept or open any e-mail attachment if they are unsure of the name of the sender of the e-mail
- Many items on the Internet are copyright and should not be printed or incorporated into other documents unless permitted. If in doubt, pupils should check with a member of staff
- The opportunity to use the Internet and e-mail facilities is a privilege, given to assist pupils in their work
- Pupils should be under no illusion. Any breach of these guidelines will have serious consequences for the user.

## Microsoft Teams

As a school, and to support work in the classroom we use Microsoft Teams for online learning and the setting of and submission of homework. We continue to use Teams for a variety of uses across all areas of the curriculum. It would be very useful for Year 7s to be familiar with Teams before joining in September.

The information for Online Learning is on our website, and has 2 documents which can be accessed via the following link.

[Online learning via Teams | Pupils | Thomas Mills High School](#)

The following link is a useful video which can be found on YouTube

[Microsoft Teams | The Beginners Guide to Teams - YouTube](#)

### Speak up Speak out

"A non-urgent, anonymously used reporting tool designed to make your school a better place for all."



# Computing & ICT (Information & Communications Technology)

## Facilities

Our computer network has been upgraded and expanded greatly in the last few years. There is now close to one computer for every three pupils. The centre of the network is the Learning Resource Centre in the Library, but there are seven other main computer rooms and several smaller clusters around the school. There are two specialist computer rooms in the ICT block, along with computer suites in the Maths Centre and the Scrivener Building, both of which have been recently updated. There is a new suite of computers in Music which are used for composing and developing an understanding of music technology. In addition, there are computer suites in the Art, DT, French and German teaching areas.

We have an ongoing programme of replacing and updating equipment to meet the ever changing demands placed upon it.

Our Internet connection, provided by the East Coast Broadband Consortium (E<sup>2</sup>BN), is available to pupils for activities to do with their studies.

Every pupil is allocated an individual network user area on entry to the school and they are free to transfer work between the school network and home PC via e-mail or pen drive etc. Pupils are also able to access their work on the school network from home via the school website. In order to protect the work of both staff and pupils we ensure that our virus protection is kept up to date, with virus signatures updated on a daily basis. All staff and pupil work areas are also backed up daily.

## Curriculum Use

A programme of core ICT lessons is delivered to all pupils in years 7, 8 and 9. ICT is also used in the context of other lessons, across the whole curriculum. Pupils may expect to spend some time each year, in every subject, using computers to help them in their studies. By so doing, and building upon their lessons with ICT specialist teachers, they will also be developing their general ICT skills.

## Access to the Network at Other Times

Pupils may use the Learning Resource Centre in the Library and other computer facilities at breaks or lunch-times and before or after school.

## Qualifications

AQA GCSE Computer Science

AQA A-Level Computer Science

Edexcel Level 3 BTEC National Extended Certificate in Information Technology

## Thomas Mills and the Internet

The school website contains information for parents, for former pupils, staff and Governors. It also has a useful links page where students can access their files and the files stored in a shared network drive. The URL for our site is <http://www.thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk>.

## Security And Internet Access

Our internet service provider devotes significant time and resources in order to provide a safe, secure environment for students to access the internet. In addition to this we also use our own proxy server to encourage the educational use of these facilities.

# Music Department

There are many opportunities for children to participate in musical activities or to take instrumental and singing lessons at this school.

## **Musical Ensembles**

The **School Orchestra** comprises approximately 45 players. It welcomes string players from Grade 3 standard and wind and brass players from Grade 5. Recent repertoire has included *Schubert's Unfinished Symphony*, *William Tell Overture*, *Night on a Bare Mountain*, *Peer Gynt Suite*, *Prelude* by Charpentier, and various film scores.

The **Second Orchestra** consists of around 20 players and is a beginner ensemble. It performs at both the Christmas and Easter Concerts.

In addition, there are several other ensembles, including String Group, Jazz Group, Wind Band, Flute Choir, String Quartet, and Cello Ensemble. These groups perform regularly at concerts throughout the year. Sixth Form students often take the initiative to direct and organise their own ensembles.

We also have a Junior Choir and a Senior Choir. Recent performances by the **Junior Choir** have included *Here Comes the Sun* by The Beatles and *Can't Stop the Feeling* by Justin Timberlake. The **Senior Choir** has sung classical works such as movements from Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Handel's *Messiah*, as well as pop classics including *Skyfall* by Adele and *Defying Gravity* from *Wicked*. For more advanced singers, we offer an auditioned **Chamber Choir**, which performs more challenging jazz and classical repertoire.

## **Instrumental Lessons**

Lessons are available for most instruments at a cost of £250 per year (£125 per year for those taking GCSE or A-level Music). Concessions may be available in certain circumstances, and fees are payable in two instalments. We make every effort to accommodate requests for tuition, especially for students who have already begun learning an instrument at primary school.

We offer lessons on both acoustic and electric guitar, as well as drum kit. There may be vacancies in these areas in September. We are also pleased to offer voice tuition, which operates in the same way as instrumental lessons. Piano lessons are available through a private arrangement with visiting teachers. To arrange piano lessons, please complete the music form, which will be forwarded to the relevant teacher.

Each student will receive either an individual or, more commonly, a group lesson to start with. Lessons follow a rotating schedule to ensure students do not miss the same subject lesson each week.

Every student who signs up is entitled to a free half-term of tuition. If, at the end of this period, the student and teacher decide not to continue, no charge is made. If lessons are to continue, £67 will be payable for that term. Full payment details will be shared during the first half of the autumn term.

To assist with planning, I would be grateful if you could complete the Microsoft Form by **Friday, 18th July**. This will help us arrange lessons for your child in September, subject to availability. Please note that we cannot guarantee instrumental or singing lessons if no vacancies are available, and any requests submitted after the deadline may not be accommodated in September.

We are really looking forward to welcoming your child in September.

Anna Ducker  
Director of Music

MUSIC DEPARTMENT Reply Slip (1)



Already plays an Instrument

MUSIC DEPARTMENT Reply Slip (2)



Would like to begin having lessons

# Behaviour at Thomas Mills High School

## Introduction

The school's Charter of Values underpins how we behave and all that we do.

## The Fundamental Principles (See Behaviour for Learning Policy)

We want to sustain a culture with high expectations of behaviour that supports a calm, orderly and safe environment conducive to effective learning. Children need to be taught how to behave well. Poor behaviour can impact on lost learning, child on child abuse, anxiety, bullying, violence and distress and there can be no place for that. Staff can support high expectations through a consistent approach. The typical pupil will exercise self-discipline and thrive within a calm and purposeful environment. Some students will require specific intervention and support to reach this standard and thrive too. Excellent respectful relationships are at the heart of the school's achievement culture.

## Classroom Behaviour Protocols

Pupils will be taught and expected to understand our classroom behaviour protocols. At Thomas Mills High School and Sixth Form, we operate the "Rs" on the few occasions we have to deal with disruptive behaviour in the classroom.

<b>REMINDE</b>	Your class teacher will re-iterate expectations and remind you that the behaviour you are demonstrating is not acceptable. You will be issued with a clear FIRST WARNING.
<b>RESET</b>	If your unacceptable behaviour continues, you will be given an opportunity to "reflect and reset" (outside of the classroom if teacher deems appropriate). Your teacher will speak to you, for a short period of time and away from others. You will be asked to reflect on how your behaviour is impacting your learning, and the learning of others. You will be issued with a clear FINAL WARNING.
<b>REMOVE</b>	If you do not correct your unacceptable behaviour at this point, after the two warnings above, you will be REMOVED to another teaching room. You must follow the clear instructions of the classroom teacher and the on-call member of staff. Your parents will be contacted to inform them and a meeting arrange to discuss future strategies to improve your behaviour.
<b>RESTORE</b>	A discussion to make sure that poor behaviour does not happen again, and a fresh start for the following lesson.

## A Restorative Approach

We have a restorative approach when pupils behaviour fails to meet our expectations. Restorative approaches encourage pupils to think about how their behaviour affects others, both pupils and staff. It encourages respect, responsibility, self-discipline, honesty and social and personal growth.

When a pupil behaves poorly they will be asked to consider and correct their behaviour so that it does not happen again. Pupils are supported in a constructive way to recognise the consequences of their behaviour. When a pupil behaves poorly staff should look to assess if the poor behaviour is a result of an unmet need.

The full Thomas Mills High School behaviour policy can be accessed via the school website.

[POLICY DOCUMENT 1 - APPROVED 23](#)